

Message Text

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44

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 RSC-01

PA-01 PRS-01 USIA-06 CIAE-00 INR-05 NSAE-00 (ISO) W

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R 181120Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

TO USDAO BERN

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 1573

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

DIA WASHDC

USCINCEUR

CONFIDENTIAL ALGIERS 2801

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PINR, AG

SUB: DEATH OF AHMED MEDEGHRI

REF: USDAO BERN 991 (NOTAL)

1. IN ABSENCE OF AUTHORITATIVE REPORT FROM MEDICAL COMMISSION APPOINTED TO EXAMINE CIRCUMSTANCES OF MEDEGHRI DEATH, WIDE VARIETY OF SPECULATIVE STORIES ARE STILL CIRCULATING. THEY INCLUDE POISONING, SUICIDE AND ASSASSINATION BY FIRST WIFE, SECOND WIFE OR UNIDENTIFIED POLITICAL OPPOSITION. WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT DEATH WAS CAUSED BY LARGE DOSE OF PAIN-KILLING DRUGS WHICH MEDEGHRI APPARENTLY ADMINISTERED TO HIMSELF UPON RETURNING FROM CABINET MEETING MORNING DECEMBER 10, AND THAT NO FOUL PLAY WAS INVOLVED.

2. AT NO TIME DURING IMMEDIATE AFTERMATH OF DEATH OR FUNERAL CEREMONIES, WHICH WERE ATTENDED BY ALL HIGH RANKING GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, WERE EXTRA SECURITY PRE-CAUTIONS IN EVIDENCE. SO FAR AS WE AWARE, COUNTRY HAS REMAINED COMPLETELY CALM. FONMIN BOUTEFLIKA HAS NOT

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RETURNED TO NEW YORK, AN ADDITIONAL SIGN OF NORMALCY,

AND CABINET HAS RESUMED MEETINGS ON 1975. BUDGET.

3. HOCINE TAYEBI, SECGEN OF MININTERIOR, IS ACTING HEAD OF MINISTRY. HE IS CAPABLE ADMINISTRATOR WHO RECENTLY RETURNED FROM TRIP TO GUINEA-BISSAU WHERE HE WAS HELPING ORGANIZE INTERNAL ADMINISTRATION OF NEW GUINEA-BISSAU GOVERNMENT.

4. ONE RESULT OF DEATH IS THAT LOCAL MEDIA HAVE BEGUN PUBLISHING PHOTOS AND NAME OF MINISTER OF STATE CHERIF BELKACEM, WHO HAS NOT BEEN WORKING MEMBER OF GOVERNMENT FOR PAST SIX MONTHS. WE HAVE HEARD REPORTS THAT IN GESTURE OF SOLIDARITY FOLLOWING MEDEGHRI DEATH, BOUMEDIENE AND BALKACEM HAVE PATCHED UP DIFFERENCES AND BELKACEM WILL SOON RESUME HIS RESPONSIBILITIES.

5. ALGIERS 2767 BEING REPEATED USDAO BERN FOR INFO. DO NOT BELIEVE FURTHER QUESTIONING OF GOUDJIL IS REQUIRED AT THIS TIME.BARR

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DEATHS, DEATH REPORTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 18 DEC 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ElyME
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974ALGIER02801
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740368-0495
From: ALGIERS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741230/aaaaazsx.tel
Line Count: 80
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 74 USDAO BERN 991
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ElyME
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 06 MAY 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <06 MAY 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <26 MAR 2003 by ElyME>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DEATH OF AHMED MEDEGHRI
TAGS: PINT, PINR, AG, (MEDEGHRI, AHMED)
To: BERN
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005